

NEWTON
Town Vehicle Policy
Adopted: 08/20/13
Amended: 08/19/14

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the guidelines under which Town vehicles will be authorized to Town personnel and the guidelines under which Town vehicles may be operated and used.

2. APPLIES TO:

The provisions of this policy apply to all general government employees, who operate and/or use town vehicles. As part of a department's standard operating procedures, a Department Head may choose to adopt rules of operation and use that are more stringent (but not less) than this policy outlines.

Exception: The Fire and Police Departments may deviate from this policy as necessary in order to perform training and emergency operations.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that employees are using town-owned vehicles for town purposes and consistent with recognized best practices in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. Any volunteer authorized by a Department Head to drive a Town vehicle at any time shall be bound by each and every provision of this policy pertaining to an "employee".

It is the policy of the Town of Newton to authorize the acquisition and utilization of vehicles for use by officials of the Town, in the conduct of their employment responsibilities, either during the work shift or on a twenty-four (24) hour on-call basis. All new vehicles acquired by the Town shall be stock or factory color and shall not be altered. Town vehicles are for use by town employees only.

Town vehicles are assigned on a departmental basis to be used by that department only. Other departments are not to use vehicles not assigned to them unless in an emergency situation.

They are not personal vehicles and are not for personal use. Town vehicles should be viewed as belonging to the citizens of Newton and are assigned solely for purposes consistent with providing services to those citizens.

All town vehicles that have not been assigned to a town employee / department for 24 hour use, and are not on official business, shall be parked at the appropriate town department / office and be available for official town use. The location shall be determined by which town department has possession or use of the vehicle.

3. ASSIGNMENT OF TOWN VEHICLES FOR 24 HOUR USE

A. Vehicle Approved for Commuting Purposes

1. The assignment of vehicles for twenty-four (24) hour use will be made in writing by Department Heads to the Selectmen, and will only be considered for employees who require a vehicle for the ordinary and necessary discharge of their job functions. Criteria, which will be used in the determination of eligibility for 24-hour vehicle use, include:

- Officially designated on-call status; (i.e. Fire Chief, Police Chief or covering officer)
- Requirement for frequent emergency availability;
- Emergency or other equipment contained in the vehicle;

Such assignment may be rescinded with reasonable notice by the Selectmen for work-related reasons.

2. Whenever a position becomes vacant, the authorization for 24-hour use for commuting shall be reevaluated.

3. Employees assigned town vehicles on a 24-hour basis will be given a copy of this policy and will be required to sign a confirmation of receipt.

4. VEHICLE USE AND OPERATION:

1. Town vehicles must have the Town seal or department insignia patches affixed on the drivers and passenger side doors (except for unmarked Police vehicles), and may only be used for legitimate municipal business.

2. Town vehicles will not be used to transport passengers who are not directly or indirectly related to town business. Passengers should be limited to Town employees and individuals who are directly associated with town work activity (committee members, consultants, contractors, town employees from other communities) or by others that have been granted special permission of the Board of Selectmen.

3. Vehicles should contain only those items for which the vehicle is designed. The Town shall not be liable for the loss or damage of any personal property transported in the vehicle.
4. All drivers must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
5. Employees are expected to keep town vehicles clean and remove trash and debris, etc. upon leaving the vehicle. They are to report any malfunction or damage of the vehicle to their supervisor immediately.
6. Employees are not allowed to transport animals in town vehicles unless they are service animals or transport is a job related function.
7. Employees are not allowed to smoke in town vehicles.
8. Employees and other vehicle passengers must wear seatbelts in Town vehicles so equipped during operation of the vehicle.
9. Employees are discouraged from using cell phones in non-emergency situations while driving town vehicles.
10. While on town business, employees shall not operate town vehicles under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, medication or impaired by fatigue or injury that may interfere with effective and safe operation of the vehicle. This is cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
11. Employees who operate town vehicles must have a valid motor vehicle license issued by the state of their current residence and may be required to provide proof of valid motor vehicle license once every year on their anniversary date.
12. Employees driving town vehicles shall obey all applicable traffic and parking regulations, ordinances, and laws.
 - a) Employees who incur parking or other fines in town vehicles will generally be personally responsible for payment of such fines unless the Board of Selectmen approve the payment of such fines by the Town.

- b) Employees who are issued citations for any offense while using a town vehicle must notify their supervisor immediately when practicable, and the supervisor must then notify the Board of Selectmen, but in no case later than 24 hours. Failure to provide such notice may be grounds for disciplinary action.
 - c) An employee who is assigned a town vehicle and who is arrested for or charged with a motor vehicle offense for which the punishment includes suspension or revocation of the motor vehicle license, whether in his or her personal vehicle or in a town vehicle, must notify his or her supervisor within 24 hours of offense. Supervisor must then notify the Board of Selectmen. Conviction for such an offense may be grounds for loss of town vehicle privileges and/or further disciplinary action.
 - d) An employee who is involved in any motor vehicle accident involving a town vehicle shall contact their supervisor immediately who will contact the Police and the Board of Selectmen.
13. No employee may use a town vehicle for out of state use without advance notice of the Department Head and approval of the Board of Selectmen.
14. Every town vehicle will have a vehicle log and it must be filled out for every use.
15. Any town employee convicted of a DUI or that receives a license suspension is required to notify his supervisor within 24 hours or as soon as practicable.

5. Use of Personal Vehicles for Town Business

1. Mileage Reimbursement

Employees are directed to use town-owned vehicles to conduct authorized town business when possible. When individuals are unable to use a town-owned vehicle to conduct official business, they will receive compensation for the use of their personal vehicle. Compensation is given at the predetermined per-mile rate approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Persons claiming reimbursement shall fill out the mileage reimbursement form and submit to the Department for approval; then submit to the Bookkeeper for payment. All employees who operate a personal vehicle on town business must have a valid driver's license with a current registration

and inspection sticker, including insurance for the vehicle they are operating. Employees are responsible for knowing all state and local motor vehicle laws, including the latest amendments.

2. Employees are not allowed to respond to calls with non-town employees in personal vehicles.
3. Employees must notify their supervisor within 24 hours or as soon as practicable about any motor vehicle accident or moving violation, including but not limited to DUI, no insurance, and any driver's license suspension which occurred while the employee was driving a personal vehicle while on town business. The supervisor must then report such accident or violation to the HR Officer within twenty-four (24) hours or as soon as practicable.

6. GPS

1. Town Vehicles may be equipped with a Global Position System (GPS).
2. Any malfunction of a GPS unit will be investigated. If an employee is found to have caused the malfunction by tampering, vandalism or other misconduct, the employee will be disciplined / criminally charged in accordance with Section 7.

7. DISCIPLINE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

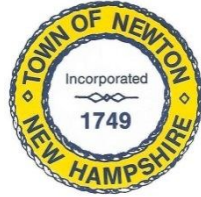
Employees shall be subject to corrective or disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution for violations of this policy in accordance with the Town's Personnel Policy.

Corrective action may also include removal from driving responsibilities, which may result in the reduction in the employee's classification and pay, and may result in the removal of the employee from their position with the Town.

8. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENFORCEMENT

Department Heads and Supervisors shall be entrusted with the day-to-day enforcement of the Vehicle Policy.

Town Vehicle Policy, continued
Vehicle Mileage Log



Town of Newton
Vehicle Use Policy
Attachment B – Acknowledgement

I, _____ (print name), as an employee of the Town of Newton, hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, understand, and agree to abide by the Town's Vehicle Use Policy.

If assigned a Municipal Vehicle and/or receive a Vehicle Stipend and/or use a Personal Vehicle for work related travel, I shall comply with the respective provisions of the policy or those portions of the policy not specifically regulated by law or collective bargaining agreement or individual agreement/contract.

Once signed, this form will be placed in the employee's personnel file by the HR Director for records purposes.

(This policy is subject to change as determined by the Board of Selectmen)

Employee Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

(Copy valid motor vehicle license below)